

Institute for Natural Church Development - an institute on church growth founded in Germany in 1989 by Christian A. Schwarz, involving 40,000 participating churches in 70 countries. The goal of the Institute is to help churches of all denominations experience qualitative and quantitative growth.

Web Site: <http://www.ncd-international.org/public/index.html>

Participating church in our area: Newark UMC

Background Principles:

1. The Trinitarian Compass – Rooted in God’s Three-fold Revelation

Green: Creation – God the Father (Ps 19:2, Rom 1:19f)

Red: Salvation – Jesus Christ (John 14:9, Col 2:9, 2 Cor 5:19, Rom 6:23)

Blue: Personal – Holy Spirit (Gal 2:20 & 4:19, Col 1:27, 1 Cor 12:3)

Christ for us becomes Christ in Us

Green/Reflective: Tolerance & Social Justice (science, art & politics)

Red/Proactive: Evangelism & Discipleship (scripture, devotions and personal ethics)

Blue/Affective: Emotional Health & Spiritual Power (worship, signs & wonders, and spiritual experiences)

Spiritual Balance – ID which one is least developed

2. The Principles (of Church Health)

1. are universally valid
2. must be proven (by research on a world-wide scale)
3. deal with essentials (Biblical)
4. individualized (give you criteria that enable you to discover what should be done in a given situation)

Mark 4:26-29 – **the goal** is to reduce human made hindrances to all-by-itself growth. Everything we need to see the church grow has already been provided by God – instead of using the tools that God has given us, we try to push and pull the church in our own strength.

<p>Six Growth Forces: Interdependence Multiplication Energy transformation Sustainability Symbiosis Fruitfulness</p> <p>Targeted at releasing all-by-itself growth</p>	<p>Eight Quality Characteristics:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Empowering</td> <td>leadership</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Gift-Based</td> <td>ministry</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Passionate</td> <td>spirituality</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Effective</td> <td>structures</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Inspiring</td> <td>worship service</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Holistic</td> <td>small groups</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Need-Oriented</td> <td>evangelism</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Loving</td> <td>relationships</td> </tr> </table> <p>The <i>adjective</i> is the decisive factor</p>	Empowering	leadership	Gift-Based	ministry	Passionate	spirituality	Effective	structures	Inspiring	worship service	Holistic	small groups	Need-Oriented	evangelism	Loving	relationships
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3. The Minimum Factor – the least-developed **quality** characteristic that determines the overall ability of the church to sustain the growth (**quantity**) God alone provides. Also involves identifying which color zone a congregation needs to develop in order to reflect God’s nature more faithfully.

If we want to experience growth, we have no choice but to face that which we are most tempted to flee.

4. Implementation:

1. 30 church members (plus the pastor) complete the NCD Survey (provided by the National NCD partner or one of their NCD consultants) to find out how strongly developed each of the eight quality characteristics is in your situation. The price is \$150 (purchased online at <http://www.churchsmart.com/store/dynamicIndex.asp>)
2. Focus on your minimum factor, the quality characteristic that achieves the lowest score on the survey.
3. Set qualitative goals in the area of your minimum factor. Describe precisely what you want to reach within a given time frame.
4. In all of your decisions, learn consistently to work in harmony with the six growth forces of NCD. Help your people move into this new framework of thinking.
5. Apply the Trinitarian compass to the area of your minimum factor: which of the three colors describes the future growth area of your church? Develop plans for how to grow in this area.
6. Do a second NCD survey and compare results with the first one. Can you already see a qualitative increase?
7. Expect quantitative growth. Increasing the quality of the church is the root of numerical growth; after a certain time it will happen all by itself.

5. Your Starting Point

Once you have identified your starting point, it is usually quite obvious what your next steps ought to be.

Accept the results – celebrate your strengths since they are divine gifts and don't fight your weaknesses – but look for creative ways to grow in those areas. Remember that everyone has strengths and weaknesses. Every believer and church is out of balance – consider that you are working with a personal fitness trainer who suggests you focus muscle group that you have previously overlooked. Rejoice that this imbalance has been brought to your attention. The result will be restored spiritual health.

What is true for you applies to everyone else.

Expect other people to be out of balance. Treat it as the most normal thing in the world. Learn to speak openly about your own imbalances and the imbalances of others. Nurture a climate where it is fun to share about these personal things. It's only shameful to be out of balance when we are not striving to bring more balance to our lives.

The church is nothing other than people – increasing your own spiritual health is a direct contribution to the health of your church.

Analyze the situation of your church ITO the 8 quality areas and the three colors.

Churches that have completed three or more NCD surveys have increased their quality by 6 points and their growth rate by 51% within 31 months.